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ABSTRACT

This book tells the story of the creation of a new kind of high school that truly aspires to educate all students to high standards. Believing that a deeply personalized school culture can prevent the violence that has invaded many public schools, educators at Souhegan High School in Amherst, New Hampshire, set out to create a safe, caring, and academically rigorous school. The authors chronicle their experiences as they worked through the many challenges that resulted in this extraordinarily successful school. The book portrays a real public high school (not a small alternative school) that is successfully implementing most of the reform practices recommended by national reform models; demonstrates how schools can strike a balance between the need for stricter safety measures and the social and emotional needs of each student, thus avoiding violent outbursts in schools; details the school's structure, curriculum, professional culture, and systems of accountability for all students in a heterogeneous, inclusionary setting; describes the use of teaming, advisory groups, exhibitions, and senior projects; and provides a working model of the "Breaking Ranks" recommendations, including the importance of "personalization" and democracy in education. An appendix lists the 10 common principles of the Coalition of Essential Schools. (Contains 23 references.) (RT)

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